

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A video encoding apparatus for encoding a video image comprising:

a first feature amount computing device configured to compute a statistical feature amount for each ~~frame~~ of time-continuous frames of the video image by analyzing an input video signal representing the video image;

a scene dividing device configured to divide the video image into a plurality of scenes continuous in time in accordance with the statistical feature amount, each of the scenes including ~~a frame or~~ one or more of the time-continuous frames;

a second feature amount computing device configured to compute an average feature amount for each of the scenes using the feature amount obtained by the first feature amount computing device;

an encoding parameter generator configured to generate an encoding parameter including at least an optimum frame rate and quantization step size for each of the scenes using the average feature amount; and

an encoder configured to encode the input video signal in accordance with the encoding parameter generated for each of the scenes by the encoding parameter generator.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): An apparatus according to claim 1, ~~wherein the~~ further comprising a scene selector is configured to select the scenes in accordance with operation information obtained by editing performed by an user and to provide the selected scenes to the encoding parameter generator.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): An apparatus according to claim 2, ~~which includes~~ further comprising a scene content providing device configured to provide feature of each of the scenes to the user.

Claim 4 (Original): An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the scene content providing device provides a key-frame of each scene or a thumb nail thereof to the user.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the scene content providing device provides a symbol indicating the average feature amount or feature obtained for each scene by the second feature amount computing device to the user.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the scene content providing device provides a key-frame of each scene or a thumb nail thereof and a symbol indicating the average feature amount or feature obtained for each scene by the second feature amount computing device to the user.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the statistical feature amount includes at least some of number of motion vectors, distribution, norm size, residual error after motion compensation, and variance of luminance and chrominance.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A video encoding method comprising:  
computing a statistical feature amount every frame by analyzing an input video signal;

dividing a video image including time-continuous frames into a plurality of scenes in accordance with the statistical feature amount, each of the scenes ~~formed of a frame or~~ including one or more of the time-continuous frames;

computing an average feature amount for each of the scenes, using the statistical feature amount;

generating an encoding parameter including at least an optimum frame rate and quantization step size for each of the scenes, using the average feature amount; and

encoding the input video signal in accordance with the encoding parameter generated for each of the scenes.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 8, ~~wherein the scene selecting step selects~~ further comprising selecting the scenes in editing performed by an user to use the selected scenes to generate the encoding parameter.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 9, ~~which includes~~ further comprising providing feature of each of the scenes to the user.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 10, ~~wherein the scene content providing step provides~~ further comprising providing a key-frame of each scene or a thumb nail thereof to the user.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 10, wherein ~~the scene content~~ the providing step the feature provides a symbol indicating the average feature amount or feature obtained for each scene to the user.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 10, wherein ~~the scene content~~ the providing device the feature provides a key-frame of each scene or a thumb nail thereof and a symbol indicating the average feature amount or feature obtained for each scene to the user.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A computer program stored on a computer readable medium, comprising:

instruction means for instructing a computer to compute a statistical feature amount every frame by analyzing an input video signal;

instruction means for instructing the computer to divide a video image including time-continuous frames into a plurality of scenes in accordance with the statistical feature amount, each of the scenes ~~formed of a frame or~~ including one or more of the time-continuous frames;

instruction means for instructing the computer to compute an average feature amount for each of the scenes, using the statistical feature amount;

instruction means for instructing the computer to generate an encoding parameter including at least an optimum frame rate and quantization step size for each of the scenes, using the average feature amount; and

instruction means for instructing the computer to encode the input video signal in accordance with the encoding parameter generated for each of the scenes.